

Park was Recently Expanded by Landrieu-Melancon Bill
April 23, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S Rep. Charlie Melancon (LA-03) said today he was pleased Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve will receive \$945,000 in federal funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, also known as the Recovery Act or the stimulus bill. The funding was announced yesterday by the U.S. Secretary of Interior.

"Jean Lafitte National Park protects a rich and thriving portion of south Louisiana's natural beauty, educating visitors from around the country about the importance of restoring our marshes and coastal wetlands," said Rep. Melancon. **"These conservation investments from the Recovery Act will sustain jobs in south Louisiana while making improvements to Jean Lafitte Park for future generations of guests to enjoy."**

The funding will be used by the park to remove storm debris from waterways in the Barataria Preserve, repair and replace storm-damaged park facilities and assets, improve access at the park's Prairie Acadian Cultural Center in Eunice, and lower energy costs by replacing old light fixtures with more efficient ones.

Last month, over 3,000 acres of freshwater wetlands were added to Jean Lafitte Park when Congress passed legislation introduced by Rep. Melancon and U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu to expand the park. The Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve Boundary Adjustment Act (S. 783, H.R. 1387) also authorizes the park to acquire up to 5,857 acres of neighboring private lands from willing sellers, including the historic Fleming-Berthoud Sugar Plantation in the Town of Jean Lafitte. This expansion will add important wooded, freshwater wetlands to the Barataria Preserve section of the park and allow the park boundary to conform to existing waterways and levee corridors.

The Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve was established to preserve significant examples of the rich natural and cultural resources of Louisiana's Mississippi Delta region. The park consists of six physically separate sites: cultural centers in Lafayette, Thibodaux, and Eunice; the Chalmette Battlefield; Barataria Preserve; and the park's headquarters and visitor center located in New Orleans' French Quarter. The Barataria Preserve, which was expanded by the Landrieu-Melancon bill, interprets the culture of those who settled the area and the unique ecosystem that sustained them, and preserves a representative example of the Delta's environment, containing natural levee forests, bayous, swamps and marshes.

For a complete list of national park system projects awarded funding through the Recovery Act, please visit <http://www.interior.gov/recovery/nps>.

###